

***Legislation Passes as Record Gas Prices and Profits for Big Oil Continue for Memorial Day Holiday***

Recognizing the need for energy security and innovation in the U.S., Rep. **Brad Miller** (NC-13) this week supported legislation that paves the way for cutting-edge energy research and punishes those taking advantage of working families who are already struggling to pay skyrocketing gas prices.

"It is especially evident when North Carolinians go to fill their cars up with gas, that we need other options to fuel our cars, our homes and businesses," Rep. Miller said. "We need to promote energy innovation and punish profiteering to help prevent this kind of energy crisis."

Among the bills Rep. Miller supported this week:

- H.R. 364, establishes the Advanced Research Projects Agency. The measure authorizes \$4.9 billion for fiscal years 2008-2012 to establish an ARPA-E within the Department of Energy, modeled after the Department of Defense's DARPA. The measure authorizes \$4.9 billion for fiscal years 2008-2012 to establish an ARPA-E within the Department of Energy, modeled after the Department of Defense's DARPA. The mission of ARPA-E would be to help decrease U.S. dependence on oil by rapidly developing and commercializing transformational, clean energy technologies. The agency would recruit the best and brightest science and technology researchers and allow them unprecedented flexibility to develop cutting-edge technologies to be pushed from the lab into the public domain for consumption. Rep. Miller is a co-sponsor of H.R. 364 which passed the Science Committee yesterday and now moves to the full House for consideration.

- H.R. 632, the H-Prize Act of 2007, would create a prize program at the Department of Energy for advances in hydrogen technologies to be administered through a private, non-profit entity. Prizes are one tool the federal government can use to stimulate efforts to overcome technical hurdles in using hydrogen as transportation fuel. H.R. 632 passed the Science Committee yesterday and now moves to the full House for consideration.

- H.R. 1252, the Energy Price Gouging Prevention Act. This legislation would provide immediate relief to consumers by giving the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) the explicit authority to investigate and punish those who artificially inflate the price of energy. The FTC would be empowered to exercise this authority at each stage of the energy production and distribution chain. In addition, the bill would provide a clear, enforceable definition of price gouging, focus enforcement on the worst offenders, specifically those companies with more than \$500,000,000 in sales per year, impose tough criminal penalties of up to \$150 million for corporations, and fines of up to \$2 million plus jail sentences of up to 10 years for individuals and strengthen penalties by providing new civil penalties, with up to triple damages of the profits gained by the violation, directing penalties collected from price gougers to go towards the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP). H.R. 1252 passed in the House.

- H.R. 2264, the No Oil Producing and Exporting Cartels Act. The measure exempts OPEC and other nations from the provisions of the Foreign Sovereign Immunities Act to the extent those governments are engaged in price-fixing and other anticompetitive activities with regard to pricing, production and distribution of petroleum products. It makes clear that the so-called "Act of State" doctrine does not prevent courts from ruling on antitrust charges brought against foreign governments and that foreign governments are "persons" subject to suit under the antitrust laws. It authorizes lawsuits in U.S. federal court against oil cartel members by the Justice Department. H.R. 2264 passed in the House.

Recently, the average price for a gallon of gasoline rose to a record **\$3.22 per gallon**. As Americans make plans for the Memorial Day Weekend, many are rightfully concerned that gas prices will only go higher.

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